

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN POLAND'S POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION

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Abstract. *Migration from Ukraine to Poland, especially after 24th February 2022, has become one of the key issues of international policy. The aim of this publication is to analyze the strategies and challenges faced by Poland in managing Ukrainian migration, both at the national and international level. The work focuses on Poland's migration policy towards Ukraine, bilateral cooperation and activities in the EU and in relations with other countries. The analysis shows that Poland, as the main receiving country for migrants from Ukraine, is conducting intensive activities both at the national and international level. These include the integration of migrants, financial support and relocation policies, which require a long term strategy. The adopted conclusions can constitute a basis for considerations on the future of Poland's migration policy towards Ukraine and its role in the European migration management system.*

Keywords: Poland, Ukraine, migration, international policy, EU, integration of migrants.

1. INTRODUCTION

The war in Ukraine, which began on 24th February 2022, has sparked one of the largest migration crises in Europe since World War II (UNHCR, 2024a). Faced with Russia's brutal attack, millions of Ukrainian citizens were forced to flee their homes and seek refuge abroad. Poland, as a neighboring country, played a key role in the first days and weeks of the conflict, becoming the main destination for Ukrainian migration (Brunarska et al., 2023).

The scale of the refugee influx, their needs and the long term effects of the presence of a large group of migrants have had a significant impact on Poland's domestic migration policy and its position in international politics (Nowak, 2022). The speed and scope of actions that Poland had to take in response to the humanitarian crisis have revealed both the willingness of society and institutions to help (Pac, 2024b) and the systemic gaps in migration management (Institute of Public Affairs, 2024).

In response to the rapidly changing situation, Poland has taken a number of legislative, administrative and diplomatic actions aimed at both supporting refugees and protecting the state's interests (Office for Foreigners, 2023). These issues have also been raised in the EU, where Poland has sought solidarity, financial support and the development of a common approach to the problem of migration (Ministry of Finance, 2024c).

This paper will discuss the causes of Ukrainian migration to Poland (Adamczak, 2022), the main challenges related to its effects (Chmielecka, 2021), and the strategies undertaken by Poland in response to this crisis. Particular attention will be paid to international activities – both in bilateral relations with Ukraine (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022) and in the context of cooperation within the EU and with other countries. This analysis will contribute to a better understanding of how Poland is adapting its migration policy in the face of the dynamic challenges of the contemporary world.

The aim of this article is to understand Poland's role in managing the migration crisis caused by the armed conflict in Ukraine and to assess actions taken at both the national and international levels. The mass influx of refugees after 24th February 2022 had a significant impact on Poland's migration policy, as well as on its relations with the EU and other countries (Nowak, 2022).

The analysis focuses on key aspects of Ukrainian migration to Poland, including its causes, socio-economic consequences (Deloitte, 2024; National Bank of Poland, 2023), and political challenges (Pac, 2024a). Particular attention will be paid to the strategies implemented by Poland to manage this process, as well as cooperation with Ukraine and international institutions in the field of migration regulation and assistance to refugees (International Organization for Migration, 2023).

Moreover, identification of some of the salient challenges facing Poland from such a massive influx of Ukrainian refugees is another key objective. For example, how it has changed the country's internal and external political strategies. This article also examines legal regulations, support mechanisms for migrants and diplomatic activities conducted by Poland within the EU and in the international arena (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024a). Additionally, it will discuss forecasts regarding the future migration policy of Poland towards Ukraine and its impact on the stability of the region.

In the context of the set objectives, the research question arose: What challenges and strategies has Poland adopted in its international policy towards Ukrainian migration and what consequences have they had for its relations with Ukraine and the EU?

In response, the hypothesis was adopted that Poland, as one of the main countries receiving refugees from Ukraine, has implemented both national and international strategies aimed at managing the migration crisis. Despite intensive actions, the lack of a uniform migration policy in Europe and differences in the approaches of EU member states (European Commission, 2024b; Kaczmarek, 2021) pose a significant challenge to effective migration management in the long term at the national level.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The work employs a descriptive analysis based on EU documents (e.g., European Commission, 2024b; Council of the EU, 2024b), reports of international organizations (e.g., UNHCR, 2024; OECD, 2024a), and statistical data from the European Commission, Eurostat, and FRONTEX on migration and asylum policy (e.g., Eurostat, 2024b; FRONTEX, 2024a). The analysis is also based on scientific materials such as official reports from Polish governmental bodies (e.g., Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 2023; National Bank of Poland, 2023) and studies by experts dealing with migration policy and international relations (e.g., Nowak, 2022; Pac, 2024a).

The study is divided into three parts. The first presents the causes and consequences of the migration of Ukrainian citizens to Poland after 24th February 2022. This analysis takes into account both the factors determining migration (Adamczak, 2022) and its social and economic consequences (Deloitte, 2024; Brunarska et al., 2023). The second discusses Polish-Ukrainian relations in the context of migration, with particular emphasis on Poland's migration policy, bilateral initiatives, and challenges encountered (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024e; International Organization for Migration, 2023). The third part is devoted to Poland's role in international policy related to Ukrainian migration. It presents actions taken in the EU (Kaczmarek, 2021; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024c) and cooperation with other countries, as well as forecasts regarding Poland's future migration policy (Institute of Public Affairs, 2024).

3. RESULTS

Migration from Ukraine to Poland intensified after 24th February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This conflict caused a mass exodus of civilians seeking refuge in neighboring countries, especially Poland, which became the main destination for war refugees (Nowak, 2022). According to data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), over five million people crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border in the first months of the war (UNHCR, 2023).

A report from Eurostat (2023) shows that Poland became the main destination for refugees from Ukraine, accepting the largest number of migrants in the entire EU. Migrants are mainly women and children, which is a result of Ukraine introducing the obligation to mobilize men of military age (Pac, 2024a).

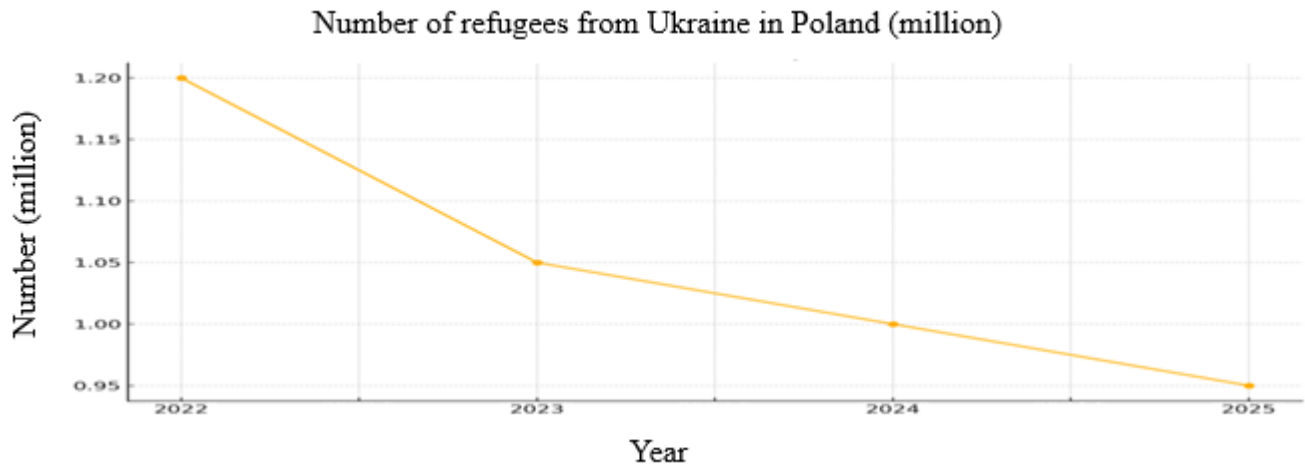


Figure 1. Social and economic consequences of Ukrainian migration for Poland

Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, Poland has become a key country for Ukrainian refugees. According to UNHCR data, over 2.5 million people had been recorded in Poland in the months following the initial influx (UNHCR, 2024). Although some of them left for the West or returned to Ukraine, a significant number decided to stay in Poland, which caused unprecedented social, economic and demographic changes. Poland, which had experience with Ukrainian labour migration before the war, had to face an entirely new challenge: integrating war refugees, the majority of whom are women and children. In 2021, for example, Ukrainians were already the largest group of foreigners on the Polish labour market (Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 2022a).

Poland is struggling with the problem of an ageing society and a low birth rate. The influx of young families from Ukraine has changed local demographic statistics, especially in the largest cities (Pac, 2024a). In Warsaw, Krakow, and Wroclaw, Ukrainian children make up a significant percentage of students in some schools, which has forced the educational system to adapt by increasing the number of preparatory classes and hiring intercultural assistants and teachers of Polish as a foreign language (Ministry of Education and Science, 2024).

The first months of the war showed great solidarity among Polish society, but in the long term, challenges emerged. Overloaded schools, health clinics, the social welfare system, and rising housing rental prices (Polish Economic Institute, 2024b) caused dissatisfaction among some local communities. The language and cultural barriers make it difficult to quickly integrate Ukrainians into social life, which can cause frustration among both migrants and Poles (Batory Foundation, 2023).

The presence of Ukrainians in Poland is not limited to problems and tensions. They enrich cultural life – Ukrainian restaurants, media, festivals, and artistic events are emerging in cities (Center for Cultural Analysis, 2023). Poles have the opportunity to learn more about the culture of their neighbor, and children learn to live in a more diverse, multicultural environment.

Ukrainian workers were the backbone of many industries before the war. According to a report from the Social Insurance Institution (2024), in 2021 Ukrainians made up over 70% of all foreigners registered for social insurance in Poland. After 2022, their number increased even more, although initially most refugees were women who needed time to enter the labour market. Today, Ukrainians are filling staffing gaps in construction, catering, agriculture, and elderly care (Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 2023). A larger number of residents means increased consumption — migrants rent apartments, buy goods and services, use public transport, education, and healthcare. This stimulates the economy and increases revenues from VAT and PIT taxes (National Bank of Poland, 2023). On the other hand, some migrants send money to their families in Ukraine, which is an outflow of funds from the Polish economy (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024a).

Between 2022 and 2024, Poland spent billions of złoty on refugee assistance: social benefits, housing benefits, education, transport and healthcare (Ministry of Finance, 2024a). Some of this spending was covered by EU funds, but Poland also had to dip into its own budget reserves (Ministry of Finance, 2024c).

The sudden increase in demand for apartments has caused a sharp increase in rental prices, especially in large cities. According to a report by the Polish Economic Institute (2024b), rental prices in Warsaw increased by an average of 20% in 2022.

Poland has gained a reputation in Europe and around the world as the country that has best managed such a large influx of refugees. However, in the long term, improved coordination with the EU is necessary to avoid a situation in which Poland bears most of the costs of this assistance alone.

The long-term consequences of migration will depend on several key factors: the effectiveness of social integration, the development of an effective housing policy, adequate educational support and the maintenance of a social climate conducive to cooperation. If Poland manages this process well, migration can become also a strong development impulse.

Ukrainian migration has changed the face of contemporary Poland. It has brought difficulties, but also opened up new opportunities: for the economy, demography, culture and international position (Pac, 2024b). The use of these opportunities depends on wise, long-term political decisions and on the will of society to accept new challenges with openness and responsibility (Pac, 2024a).

At the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, Poland adopted an open-door policy, offering Ukrainian citizens shelter and assistance. According to the Act of 12th March 2022 on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens, refugees can legally stay in Poland for 18 months with the possibility of extending their stay. These provisions also allow for full medical care, education and access to the labour market.

In practice, Poland provides refugees not only with emergency assistance, but also with long-term support. This includes, among other things, assistance in arranging housing, access to psychological support, and support in social and professional integration. Polish border guards and administrative bodies have organized reception points and assistance centers that facilitate refugee registration procedures (Brunarska et al., 2023).

Moreover, in response to the growing influx of refugees, Poland has also introduced cooperation mechanisms with international organizations, such as UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in order to ensure coordination of aid activities (International Organization for Migration, 2023).

The most important legal instrument implemented in response to the refugee crisis was the Act on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that country of 12th March, 2022 (so-called special Act). This Act granted Ukrainians a number of rights: legal residence for 18 months (later extended), the right to work without additional permits, access to health care, education, as well as social and family benefits. This document turned out to be one of the most innovative and liberal legal structures covering migration in Europe (Deloitte, 2024).

Poland has also simplified administrative procedures. Ukrainian citizens can obtain a national identification number, called a PESEL number with UKR status, which allows access to public services and the labour market (Ministry of Digital Affairs, 2023). As part of the amendment to the act from 2023, long-term residence on the basis of legal work or studies has also been made possible (Office for Foreigners, 2023).

Both the central and local governments played a key role in organizing assistance for Ukrainian citizens. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration and the Ministry of Family and Social Policy coordinated activities in the field of accommodation, registration, financial assistance, and health care (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, 2023). A special role was played by labour offices, which implemented professional activation mechanisms that enabled Ukrainians to quickly enter the labour market (Ministry of Family and Social Policy, 2023).

In addition to state structures, non-governmental organizations played a huge role, such as the Ocalenie Foundation, the Polish Humanitarian Action, Caritas Poland and the Polish Red Cross. They provided shelter, food, legal and psychological assistance, and supported the process of social integration of refugees (Ocalenie Foundation, 2024). These organizations cooperated with local governments and international institutions, including UNHCR and UNICEF.

The Ministry of Education and Science has taken steps to integrate Ukrainian children into the education system. Preparatory classes have been created, the number of supporting teachers has been increased, and educational platforms in Ukrainian have been launched (Ministry of Education and Science, 2024). Local governments have invested in additional places in schools and kindergartens to meet growing educational needs.

Although Poland has gained international recognition for its openness to refugees from Ukraine, in the long term, migration policy must be anchored in an integration strategy. Challenges to implementing an effective integration program include language barriers, housing difficulties, overloaded healthcare, and the risk of social exclusion. In the long term, it will be necessary to develop an immigration policy that takes into account both humanitarian, social and economic aspects.

Poland's migration policy towards Ukrainian citizens is an example of a dynamic and adaptive approach to the crisis situation. Thanks to the efficient implementation of legal solutions and the involvement of public institutions and non-governmental organizations, Poland has created a support system that has made it easier for refugees to adapt to a new country. In the coming years, it will be crucial to develop an integration policy and simultaneously monitor the effectiveness of its implementation.

In the face of the migration crisis, Poland and Ukraine have begun close cooperation at the governmental, local and non-governmental levels. One example of joint action is the establishment of humanitarian aid programs that enable the transfer of essential resources for refugees, such as food, clothing, medicine and hygiene products.

Both countries jointly coordinate assistance to refugees, organizing transport, providing shelter and providing assistance in employment and education. Additionally, Poland participates in integration projects aimed at Ukrainian citizens, such as Polish language courses and vocational training, which help migrants adapt more quickly to Poland (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2023).

Thanks to cooperation with the Ukrainian authorities, it was also possible to launch the so-called "humanitarian corridors", which facilitated migration and improved the safety of people crossing the border. Joint coordination of activities on the border, especially in the first days of the war, was of key importance for maintaining order and the efficiency of the transport of refugees.

4. CHALLENGES AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN POLISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS REGARDING MIGRATION

Although cooperation between Poland and Ukraine in the context of migration is relatively intensive, it has not been without problems and tensions. One of the main problems was the issue of logistics – the influx of millions of refugees in a short period of time required the mobilisation of enormous material and human resources, which was a burden on both the Polish government and international organizations (Pac, 2024b).

Polish-Ukrainian relations in the area of migration are complex and multidimensional. Although Poland is a key partner of Ukraine in terms of humanitarian, economic and political support, mass migration after 2022 has also revealed many challenges and conflicts of interest. Migration on such a large scale generates both development opportunities and social, economic and political tensions. The aim of this study is to analyze the most important challenges in Polish-Ukrainian relations regarding migration and to identify areas where conflicts of interest appear.

Another difficulty in Polish-Ukrainian relations was the issue of providing refugees with food, clothing and basic necessities, especially in the first days after the outbreak of the war, when Poland was

not prepared for the mass influx of people. The issue of securing transport and places for settlement was also a serious logistical problem that Polish and Ukrainian authorities struggled with.

Despite aid from the EU, Poland struggled with housing concerns and the integration of refugees into the labour market, and public debate raised concerns about the burden on public services, education and the labour market (Pac, 2024b).

One of the main challenges is the social integration of migrants from Ukraine. Language barriers, cultural differences, and limited resources in education, health, and housing lead to tensions in local communities (Batory Foundation, 2023). Poles, who initially showed great solidarity, are increasingly expressing concerns about the overload of public services and competition on the labour market.

Ukrainian migration also causes economic conflicts. On the one hand, Ukrainian workers fill staffing gaps in the Polish economy; on the other, there are concerns about lower wages in some industries and the displacement of local workers (National Bank of Poland, 2023). In addition, issues related to the export of Ukrainian grain and agricultural products cause tensions between Polish and Ukrainian producers, as seen, for example, in farmers' protests and trade discussions at the EU forum.

Although Poland supports Ukraine in the context of the war, there are disputes at the political level, including on issues related to the financing of aid, the distribution of EU funds and legal regulations concerning migrants (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024e). The differences in expectations of both sides also concern the long-term perspective – Poland expects that some refugees will return after the end of the war, while Ukraine fears a permanent outflow of labour (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024e). Migration has created gaps in the Ukrainian labour market. Due to the migration of the population for work, the problem of a shortage of workers is becoming increasingly acute (Lysiuk & Britchenko, 2020).

Public opinion polls indicate an increase in hostility towards migrants from Ukraine among some social groups in Poland. The media and politicians sometimes instrumentalize the topic of migration, which deepens social polarization and can lead to conflicts. In turn, Ukrainians sometimes feel a lack of full acceptance and difficulties in obtaining equal opportunities on the labour market, which reduces their trust in the Polish institutional system (Ocalenie Foundation, 2024).

Despite numerous challenges, there are also areas in which Poland and Ukraine can develop cooperation: creating joint integration projects, economic cooperation based on partnership, as well as coordination of activities at the EU level. Developing mechanisms of dialogue and negotiation is crucial for minimizing conflicts of interest and building long-term relations based on trust.

Challenges and conflicts of interest in Polish-Ukrainian relations regarding migration are inevitable in a situation of mass population movement. However, it is crucial that both sides – Poland and Ukraine – take action to build lasting cooperation mechanisms that will support both social and economic development. In the long term, only a well-managed migration policy based on mutual understanding will reduce tensions and use the potential that migration brings.

5. THE FUTURE OF POLAND'S MIGRATION POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE – FORECASTS AND POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS OF ACTION

Poland's migration policy towards Ukraine will require special attention in the coming years. Due to the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine, changing geopolitical realities, and economic and social challenges, Poland must develop long-term migration strategies. The aim of this study was to present forecasts regarding the future of Poland's migration policy towards Ukraine and to indicate possible directions of action that will allow us to meet the upcoming challenges.

In coming years, it is likely that some refugees from Ukraine will decide to stay in Poland permanently (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024a). This means that integration policy must be strengthened, especially in the areas of education, the labour market and housing (Batory Foundation, 2023). Poland, struggling with an aging society, can treat Ukrainian migration as a demographic opportunity, but this requires a well-planned strategy (Central Statistical Office, 2024).

The influx of migrants from Ukraine will continue to affect the Polish economy, especially in sectors requiring a large number of workers, such as construction, healthcare, agriculture and logistics (National Bank of Poland, 2023). At the same time, Poland must prepare for the challenges related to the recognition of migrants' professional qualifications, their professional activation and prevention of phenomena related to work below qualifications.

It will be necessary to develop Polish language learning programs, career counseling, courses to improve qualifications and activities supporting social integration. It is also important to increase the availability of housing and invest in social infrastructure in large cities.

Poland should continue reforms that facilitate the legalization of residence, work, and establishment of business activities by Ukrainian citizens. An important element will be the simplification of procedures for the recognition of qualifications and the introduction of fast-track mechanisms for specialists in key industries.

Cooperation with the EU and international organizations will be crucial for financing integration activities and securing the interests of both countries. Joint Polish-Ukrainian programs and active participation of Poland in shaping migration policy at the EU level are needed.

The biggest challenges include: growing social tensions, rising populism and anti-immigration sentiment, overloaded healthcare and education systems, and housing difficulties. Failure to build a coherent migration policy could lead to the marginalization of migrants and deepening social divisions.

The future of Poland's migration policy towards Ukraine depends on the ability to develop a long-term, sustainable strategy. It is necessary to combine humanitarian, economic and social actions in a way that will not only mitigate the effects of the crisis, but also use the potential of migration to build a common future. Only through a coordinated policy will Poland be able to meet the challenges that the dynamic situation in the region brings.

After the war began, Poland became one of the EU leaders in supporting Ukrainian refugees. Poland, in cooperation with the EU institutions, demanded more financial support and solidarity in the matter of refugee relocation. According to Eurostat data (2023), Poland accepted a massive number of refugees from Ukraine, which constituted the largest group of all war refugees in the EU.

Poland is participating in negotiations on the shape of the EU's migration policy, including the Pact on Migration and Asylum. Warsaw emphasizes the need to take greater account of the specificity of the EU's border states and countries that accept the most refugees, such as Poland, Slovakia and Romania (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024a). These negotiations also cover the issues of refugee relocation, sharing responsibility and flexibility in implementing asylum policy (Council of the EU, 2024b; European Commission, 2024b).

Poland effectively uses EU financial mechanisms supporting refugee-hosting countries, such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), the Refugee Aid Fund and crisis funds granted under REACT-EU (European Commission, 2024a; Ministry of Finance, 2024c). These funds enable the financing of housing, education, healthcare infrastructure and integration programmes for refugees from Ukraine.

Poland is actively involved in shaping solidarity policy in the EU, emphasizing the need to share the costs of the migration crisis and ensure an even distribution of refugees between Member States. At the same time, Warsaw draws attention to the need to maintain sovereignty in decisions regarding the admission of migrants, which causes tensions in negotiations with other EU countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024c; European Commission, 2024b).

Poland cooperates with the European Commission, the Council of the EU and EU agencies such as FRONTEX and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) to ensure effective migration management. Thanks to this cooperation, projects are implemented in the field of border protection, providing humanitarian aid, as well as supporting education and health systems in regions most affected by the influx of refugees (FRONTEX, 2024b).

Future challenges include further negotiations on the shape of the Common European Asylum System, increasing the efficiency of the use of EU funds, and strengthening Poland's position as a leader among the EU's frontline states. Poland also faces the task of reconciling national priorities with the demands of European solidarity, which will require skillful diplomacy and the ability to build alliances (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024c; Institute of Public Affairs, 2024).

The role of Poland in the EU in the context of migration from Ukraine cannot be overestimated. Thanks to active involvement in negotiations, effective fundraising and participation in solidarity policy, Poland is strengthening its position in the European arena and shaping the future of the common migration policy.

Poland also took an active part in negotiations on solidarity funds with the EU, which were aimed at supporting countries receiving refugees. Programmes such as the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund provided Poland with access to significant funds for helping refugees and their integration (European Commission, 2022a).

Cooperation with the EU was also important in the context of coordinating actions at the borders with other Member States, which facilitated controlling the influx of migrants and providing logistical support.

Poland cooperated not only with the EU, but also with neighbouring countries, such as Germany, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, in coordinating activities for refugees. Thanks to cooperation with these countries, it was possible to better separate migrants and provide support in the organisation of transport, shelter and health care.

Poland, as a member of the EU and a signatory to numerous international agreements, plays an important role in international migration management. In the face of contemporary challenges – such as refugee crises, labour migration, or climate change – diplomatic and legal cooperation with other countries is becoming crucial. The aim of this study is to present Poland's activities within the framework of international cooperation on migration, with particular emphasis on diplomacy, international agreements, and cooperation mechanisms within the EU.

Poland conducts active migration diplomacy, participating in negotiations at the bilateral and multilateral level. Through the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomatic missions, Poland participates in migration consultations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as within the framework of the Eastern Partnerships with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024a). Poland is also involved in the activities of the European External Action Service and participates in the development of EU positions towards third countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024c).

Poland is a party to key international agreements regulating the rights of migrants, including the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 New York Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1951). It also participates in the Global Compact for Migration adopted by the UN in 2018, which, although non-binding, provides a framework for cooperation in the protection of migrants (United Nations, 2018). At the regional level, Poland is part of the Schengen system, Dublin III and participates in the work of FRONTEX – the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX, 2024a).

Poland co-creates the migration policy of the EU, participating in the development of the Common European Asylum System and in the negotiations of the Pact on Migration and Asylum (European Commission, 2024b). One of the key elements is cooperation in the field of refugee relocation, protection of external borders and joint FRONTEX operations, as well as in the field of return policy towards illegal migrants (Council of the EU, 2024a; FRONTEX, 2024b).

Outside the EU framework, Poland also concludes bilateral agreements, e.g. with Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia and other Eastern Partnership countries, on labour migration, visa facilitation and cooperation in combating illegal migration (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration, 2024a). Initiatives such as the

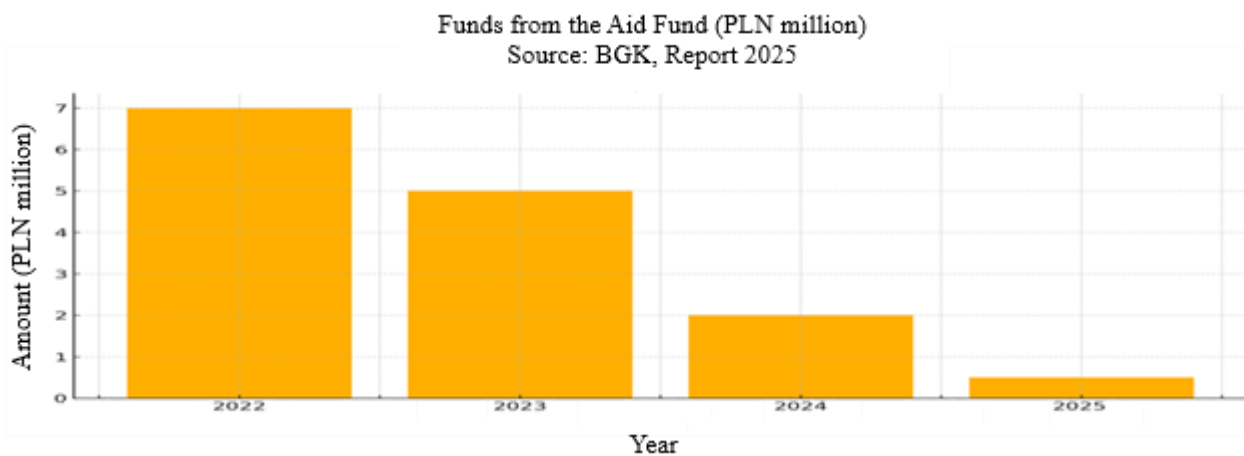
Visegrad Group provide an additional forum for the exchange of experiences and coordination of migration activities (Visegrad Group, 2024).

The biggest issues of the day are the growing geopolitical tensions, humanitarian crises and the divergence of interests of EU member states in the issue of sharing responsibility for refugees. In the future, it will be necessary to deepen cooperation in the protection of human rights, management of labour migration and building a more equitable system of responsibility between states.

Poland's cooperation with other countries in managing migration is of fundamental importance for ensuring security, stability and respect for human rights. Thanks to diplomacy, international agreements and activity in EU and global structures, Poland can effectively respond to migration challenges and build a system based on solidarity and cooperation.

Poland also concluded a number of bilateral agreements with Ukraine, which enabled mutual assistance in ensuring the safety of refugees and humanitarian transport. This cooperation also included initiatives supporting the social integration of refugees, e.g. organizing language programs or vocational courses (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022).

Poland, being one of the main countries receiving refugees from Ukraine, must not only cope with current challenges, but also plan a long-term migration policy in this case. The future depends on the stabilization of the situation in Ukraine and further support from the EU and international organizations (The European Union, 2022).



In the long term, Poland will need to focus on integrating refugees into the labour market, improving access to education and ensuring adequate housing conditions. Changes in immigration policy will also be needed, taking into account the diverse needs of migrants, both those who arrived before the war and those who arrived after its outbreak (Institute of Public Affairs, 2024).

6. CONCLUSION

Faced with the influx of millions of migrants, Poland has taken a number of actions, both in terms of legal regulations and humanitarian, integration and logistical support. Poland has become a key country accepting refugees, which has required rapid action at the political, administrative and social levels. The migration crisis triggered by the war in Ukraine has presented Poland with unprecedented challenges, both domestically and internationally.

At the international level, Poland actively participated in negotiations on the division of responsibility for the migration crisis and obtained financial and organizational support from the EU and international organizations. Nevertheless, the challenges related to the integration of migrants and the long-term consequences of the crisis remain relevant.

The massive influx of refugees after the Russian intervention in Ukraine took the Polish government and the national economy by surprise. The Polish government was forced into drastic action, given the

costs of first accepting 1.5 million and then inducting 700,000 migrants into the national economy over a period of year. The Polish treasury took the brunt of the initial costs of the influx, totalling 2.8 billion PLN in only one year (Bankier.pl, 2024).

This thesis looks at the drivers of the Polish government's response to the crisis, and its relative successes in formulating an effective migration policy, that was rolled out, countrywide over the period 2023–2025.

The assessment of Poland's role in migration negotiations indicates that this country has become one of the main actors in shaping migration policy in Europe. Cooperation with Ukraine, the EU and neighbouring countries has allowed for effective crisis management, but difficulties have also arisen, such as tensions related to the relocation of refugees or the burden on national social welfare and education systems. The research hypothesis adopted at the beginning has been confirmed, which allows for the formulation of specific recommendations for the future. In the recommendations regarding Poland's future migration policy, several key aspects should be indicated (Institute of Public Affairs, 2024):

- long-term integration policy – actions for the integration of migrants, including vocational training, language courses and professional activation programmes,
- permanent cooperation with the EU – striving for further financial and institutional support within the framework of European funds,
- better international coordination – strengthening relations with countries in the region in order to jointly manage future migration crises,
- modernization of migration policy – adaptation of legal regulations and administrative systems to new challenges related to the large number of migrants.

In summary, Poland has played a key role in managing the migration crisis, but in the future it will need to focus on long-term integration strategies and further international cooperation. Migration from Ukraine has become not only a challenge but also an opportunity for Poland's social and economic development, if managed properly.

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